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G R A N T A.

A Poem.

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G R A N T A.

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G R A N T A ;

OR,

A PAGE FROM THE LIFE OF A CANTAB,

IN THE SHAPE OF A FUGITIVE POEM.

"From grave to gay—from lively to severe."

C A M B R I D G E :

PUBLISHED BY W. H. SMITH, ROSE CRESCENT.

1836.



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P R E F A C E.

WERE a claim set up, on behalf of the following trivial effusion, for any higher title than that of a "Fragment," some apology might be considered necessary for the abruptness of its style, and the apparent obscurity of its object; but, as "Granta" professes to be nothing more than the simple enunciation of certain floating ideas, strung together, in the form of unconnected stanzas,—the truant offspring, indeed, of a few vacant hours (which ought, no doubt, to have been better employed), such an apology would only, perhaps, be deemed to savour of conceit in the Author; and of something like impertinence (on his part) towards the reader.

EPISTLE DEDICATORY

To E. K.

LET the cold Critic, or the scornful Sage,
Cased in the armour of their stoic pride,
Contemn the humble tenor of my page ;
And my young muse's vain pretensions chide :
Not *their's* the suffrage which my heart would claim,—
(The poet's wreath was never wove for me ;)
Of *love* I ask the tribute, *not of fame* ;
And seek but one approving smile from thee !

Lady, when first I met thee, there had pass'd
O'er my youth's golden hopes a fearful blight ;
For years of folly and excess had cast
My early dawn of promise into night :
Passion's deforming hand had well-nigh crush'd
Each fairer germ, each particle divine,
In my lost soul; which (*so degraded*) blush'd
To meet the pure companionship of thine !

Yet had there been a period, when my heart
With nature's richest melodies was stored ;
'Till she, who ruled it with resistless art,
Snapped—in her wantonness—the master-chord :
None could give back that harmony again,
No hand could regulate, no method bind,
Its plaintive notes; which—like th' Æolian strain—
Sigh'd—the sad plaything of each passing wind.

Lady, what int'rest can I hope to win
From one so good, so innocent, as thou,
In this my tale of misery and sin,
Such as thy guileless bosom ne'er can know ?
Yes! as the pitying angels, when they hear
Of human frailty, blame—but *weeping* blame ;
So, too, wilt thou, perchance, bestow a tear
On woman's error, and on woman's shame !

"These are the errors, and these the fruit, of mis-spending our prime youth at the Schools and Universities, as we do, either in learning mere words; or such things, chiefly, as were better unlearned."—MILTON.

G R A N T A,

§c.

I.

“ FAREWELL to Granta, and its time-worn towers,
“ The chosen site of science and of truth ;
“ Where glided once, in, ah ! too fleeting hours,
“ The careless current of my happy youth !
“ Oft in its grassy paths I've pensive strayed,
“ Rapt in the precepts of some ancient sage ;
“ Oft, stretched at ease beneath its verdant shade,
“ Pondered attentive o'er th' historic page !

II.

“ Ah, well I recollect when first began,
“ Granta! within thy walls my young career ;
“ Fresh from my childhood’s home, scarce yet a man,
“ I viewed each object with a holy fear !
“ Strange to my inexperience all things seemed,
“ Each sight, each sound, now known, alas ! too well,
“ And something more than earthly then I deemed
“ The snow-white surplice, and the chapel bell !

III.

“ Would that those happy days could dawn again !
“ Oh for that blest, that unforgotten time,
“ When leapt my young heart, free from care or pain,
“ Unscathed by passion, undefiled by crime !
“ Though hardened now my breast to deeds of sin,
“ Of every lawless passion the abode,
“ Yet fain would I life’s course once more begin,
“ And turn from Satan’s paths to those of God.

IV.

“ How sharp the pang of recollection’s sting,
“ When conscience lends her aid to barb the dart;
“ When mem’ry and remorse together bring
“ Their thousand horrors to assail the heart !
“ Each talent wasted, and each hour mispent,
“ Each warning scorned, each ill-requited care,
“ Rise like the spectral forms in Richard’s tent,
“ And yield the trembling sinner to despair !

V.

“ Vain, too, each effort, vain each spell of earth,
“ To choke with flowers the piercing thorns of sin ;
“ Vain the attempt to crush, in boisterous mirth,
“ The never-dying worm that gnaws within !
“ Conscience, o’erthrown, still rears its giant head,
“ And doubly strong, Antæus-like, springs up ;
“ The fiend still greets us in the wanton’s bed,
“ And rises sneering from the drunkard’s cup.”

VI.

Thus spoke the Student, as he slowly turned
To leave for ever the familiar scene,
Where once within his bosom deep had burned
Ambition's torch, and emulation keen ;
Where hope once shadowed out a glorious lot,
An honoured life of happiness and fame,
And smiling visions (scarcely yet forgot)
Diffused a halo round his humble name.

VII.

Edward was sprung from pure and gentle blood,
The cherished offspring of a worthy pair ;
His sire—a village pastor, poor, but good—
Espoused in youth a maid not rich—but fair :
One only son and daughter formed the ties
Which knit yet closer the old couple's love ;
The aged man had nothing else to prize
Except his flock below, and God above.

VIII.

And well deserving of the utmost zeal
A parent's rapt idolatry can show,
The tender care which only parents feel,
The anxious fears which only parents know,
Was that sweet girl, whose smile serenely bright,
Shone with affection's soft celestial ray,
To glad their aged hearts with its pure light,
And guide their footsteps o'er their weary way.

IX.

Yes, she was pure—if ever yet was given
To mortals purity, that gift was her's ;
Upon her glorious brow the God of heaven
Had set his seal in glowing characters !
Yet simple was she, for she knew no guile,
Her innate virtue was her sole defence ;
Her only weapon was her virgin smile.
Her only buckler was her innocence.

X.

Beauteous was she—in form, no less than mind,
Like some rapt poet's dreams divinely fair ;
Sweetly she smiled, as blushing she would bind
The rebel ringlets of her auburn hair.

To wond'ring minds her guardian sprite might seem,
From the bright regions of the cloudless sky,
(Prometheus-like) to have stol'n the azure beam,
And plundered Heaven to light her soft blue eye.

XI.

Her name was Isabel, and she had seen
Just sixteen summers wing their sunny flight
O'er her young head ; her life had ever been
One clear unruffled stream of calm delight.

To her the world was yet an unread page,
(A page how blotted with unnumbered tears !)
Her's was the task to cheer the pastor's age,
And smooth the pillow of declining years.

XII.

Next to the place which filial love possessed,
Lived her young brother in the maiden's heart,
He was the worshipp'd image of her breast,
Of her own being, life, and soul a part :
No lynx's eye so keen as her's to find
The claims his wayward nature had to praise ;
No eye as her's so resolutely blind
To every speck that dimmed his virtue's rays.

XIII.

He was her idol !—like th' Assyrian king
She had “set up an image of pure gold,”
To whose resplendent form was made to cling
No baser metal of inferior mould ;
No doubts her fond devotion would allow,
Affection's faith bestowed a shape divine,
And taught each feeling and each thought to bow
In prostrate adoration at the shrine.

XIV.

Proud were the parents of their only son,
And deemed his talents of a stamp most rare ;
Countless the visions which they built upon
The future fame of him, their dearest care !
Long had such joyous hopes their feelings fed,
Long had the pastor and his worthy dame
Hoarded their scanty store, that he might tread
The paths of Granta, and, they hoped, of fame.

XV.

In sooth, 'tis wondrous how parental pride
Obscures the judgment, and affects the sight :
The slightest talent in the boy espied
Fills the old people with insane delight ;
When once he's gone, 'twere worth a heavy bet
That the fond mother and the doating sire
Feel sure of reading, in the next Gazette,
Their darling youth has set the Cam on fire !

XVI.

Not *many* a child these prophe~~s~~^cies fulfils—

Prizes are scarce, and scholarships still more,

But yet there's always a supply of bills

To make the parent's purse and temper sore :

Their name is “Legion,” and they never cease

Till, driv'n half mad by each successive dun,

(The modern Jasons of a modern *fleece*,)

He d—ns the hour he got a clever son.

XVII.

Perils unnumbered on the tyro wait,

Temptation woos him in a thousand shapes.

Pleasure and licence lure him to his fate,

And virtue has some deuced near escapes !

Youth's venial follies, prudence well may brook,

Experience mostly will correct the evil ;

But there are some one really *can't* o'erlook—

Dice, drabs, and drinking, play the very devil.

XVIII.

Study to some attraction doth not lack,
But even there will disappointment lie,—
Examiners have not the happy knack
Of viewing talents with a parent's eye;
Genius, pronounced divine by partial friends,
Alas! too often, by some grievous luck,
After three years of "Alma Mater," ends
In a d—d "wooden spoon," or (worse) a pluck!

XIX.

A truce to these digressions;—now had come
The destined time for Edward to depart,
To leave for Granta's walls his parent's home,
And train fresh ties to twine around his heart.
Not all unmixed with bitterness, that hour—
Each well-known face grew dearer than before,
Each humble object gain'd redoubled power
When months must pass, e'er he should see them more.

XX.

It is no trifling change that moment brings,
That revolution of our nature—when
We “put away,” at last, all “childish things,”
And claim the passions and the cares of men ;
The robe of manhood, which, with ardent gaze,
And eager longings, our young eyes behold,
Oft, like the Centaur’s fabled gift, betrays—
And hides destruction in each graceful fold.

XXI.

The parting, like all partings of the sort,
Was fond and melancholy in th’ extreme ;
Yet not all melancholy, for a thought
Of future meetings, like a sunny beam,
Would shoot across the gloom. There was no want
Of pious precepts, warnings against sin,
And all the good old venerable cant
Which anxious parents vent their feelings in.

XXII.

A Bible, Prayer-book, tracts, some half-a-score,
All with religion and sound doctrine rife,
His mother gave, and added to the store,
“Advice to Young Men entering upon life;”
Also his father’s very last discourse,
(The text that well known one of “Sheep and Goats,”)
And last, not least, an argument of force,
A pair of neatly-folded ten-pound notes.

XXIII.

The father gave his blessing and a purse,
And, very properly, without the last
The first is thought no better than a curse,
But both together cannot be surpassed
In efficacy ; for when they’re combined,
Each gives the memory a gentle lash,
And the forgotten blessing’s called to mind
By the sweet tingle of the welcome cash.

XXIV.

The old man blessed his son, and you might spy
The parent's feelings struggling to appear;
There was a moisture in his aged eye
Which fortitude forbade to be a tear.
The blessing given, with calm and saddened mien,
And lingering steps which scarce could turn away,
He slowly left behind the parting scene ;
And sought his chamber's solitude—to pray.

XXV.

Yet one was left whose feelings, deeply pained,
Could scarcely bear her through the last farewell,
Whose prayers how deep ! whose int'rest how unfeigned !
And (need we ask) that one was Isabel !
But though her sorrow struggled for relief
No sob betrayed the anguish of her breast,
She boldly wrestled with her spirit's grief
As Edward, thus, her parting words addressed.

XXVI.

Farewell ! it, doubtless, is a painful sound
For love like our's to utter or to hear ;
A love which hath so intimately bound
Each thought and feeling of our young career
In harmony; whose notes were never strung
To breathe a single strain of jarring strife ;
And at whose bidding, instantaneous, sprung
A thousand flow'rets in our path of life.

XXVII.

Our's was the mystic union of the heart,
The concentration of two souls in one,
Which seem as though they could not breathe apart,
Whose sands of life *must* intermingled run !
Too weak to bear an independent fate,
As the winged captive of the eastern skies,
When colder climes have robbed him of his mate,
Pines, for an hour, in solitude, and dies !

XXVIII.

Enough of this—it doth not now beseem
To dwell, with vain regret, upon the past;
It was a fair but evanescent dream,
A vision all too beautiful to last!
Severe reality must now replace
The fleeting fantasies of former days;
And childhood's flowers withdraw their winning grace,
And yield to learning's more congenial bays.

XXIX.

Think, too, how great were her (thy sister's) pride
To know thee rich in academic fame;
To know that one by blood and love allied
Had raised to eminence our father's name:
Well would that consciousness each former care,
Each hour of fond solicitude, repay;
While ev'n thy sister, though denied to share,
Caught from thy glory a reflected ray.

XXX.

"Henceforth, 'tis true, our tracts are separate,
Distinct the currents of our life must flow ;
And though, at first, 'tmay seem a bitter fate,
Yet reason plainly tells it should be so ;
Mine the light skiff that's only form'd to sport
On the smooth waters of life's sunniest shore ;
While thy proud argosy, with treasure fraught,
Must spurn the waves, and dare the tempest's roar.

XXXI.

"That world, whose hidden realms thy unfledg'd wing
Is soon to visit in its daring flight,
We're taught to look on as a fearful thing—
A moral chaos, where—too oft—the right
Against the wrong is pow'rless to prevail ;
While in the ceaseless, yet unequal strife,
Religion yields, and virtue's forces fail,
And honour's self, unwilling, leaves its life.

XXXII.

"It may be so! 'tis not for maiden's skill
On themes like these, presumptuous, to decide ;
To set the boundaries of good and ill :—
But still, methinks, there is a brighter side
To the dark picture ; else we had not seen
Such fair examples in the human race :
Where had the sage, the saint, the hero been,
Had the world's history been WHOLLY base ?

XXXIII.

"The path is open, and thou must proceed
With resolution on thy bold career ;
Tho' perils threaten, and tho' toils impede,
Thy lot's appointed, and thy way is clear !
To God and conscience look for thy support,
Thy load to lighten, and thy cares to quell,
Next let the absent claim a passing thought ;
And now one last embrace, one look—farewell!"

XXXIV.

'Tis not our purpose to describe the way
Our hero travell'd, nor is it our plan
To feed vain curiosity, and say
The College where his freshman's course began ;
Whether at Trinity, St. John's, or one
Of lesser note, imports not to be known ;
Let it suffice to hear, his journey done,
He donned, instantèr, th' academic gown.

XXXV.

Installed at Granta, 'twas his earliest care
The college Tutor's residence to ask ;
Then to the awful interview repair,
(To freshman's nerves a most stupendous task).
A slight digression must be pardoned here,
While, at our leisure, we dilate upon
So vast a theme ; and give you an idea
('Tis drawn from nature) of the mighty Don !

XXXVI.

A pygmy's stature, but a giant-mind,
An aspect insignificant and mean ;
An intellect whose varied stores combined
Learning most recondite, research most keen.
These were his attributes ;—to crown the whole,
He 'd been fifth wrangler, (a superb degree !)
And was engaged at present, heart and soul,
On a new treatise of Geometry.

XXXVII.

The Mathematics were to him his food,
His moral sustenance, his dearest care :
He deemed the gift of reason only good
To solve a problem, or complete a square :
Each symbol seemed with mystic meaning fraught,
He viewed with awe each algebraic case ;
And, were the truth but known, he doubtless thought
Heav'n was a triangle, and hell its base !

XXXVIII.

Of worldly knowledge he had little part,
His learning was the learning of the school,
But in the science of the human heart
This great philosopher was but a fool !
Engaged in objects beyond mortal ken,
The earth he trod, he scarcely saw at all ;
And hence it happened every now and then,
He got, poor fellow ! an unlucky fall.

XXXIX.

We said he was a fool in worldly lore,
(A lot that some might envy him, in truth,) Yet 'twas of this he stood in need the more,
Since he'd to curb the will of head-strong youth.
And there his lamentable failure showed,
Of men and manners ignorance so vast,
'Twas clear (whate'er he'd done in Euclid's road)
The "*Ass's Bridge*" of life he had not pass'd !

XL.

'Tis, plainly, one of Nature's wisest ends,
That youth's high spirits should obtain a vent—
Whether in good or evil, much depends
On skilful guidance, and the nature's bent.

Misplaced severity too often chills
The warm outpourings of a buoyant heart;
Nips the free impulse in the bud, and kills
Of dawning life the best and brightest part.

XLI.

On various natures, various the effect,
And marked the difference the sequel shows ;
Some, their aspirings prematurely checked,
Sink down at once in indolent repose.

Others, whose fiery passions had been tame,
Would wise indulgence but have ruled their force,
Burst in a wild ungovernable flame,
And bear down Virtue's barriers in their course.

XLII.

Our worthy tutor was not quite the man
To grapple with so delicate a trust ;
His discipline was framed upon a plan
Often more mathematical than just.
He was a mighty one for forms,—and there
The slightest lapse he deemed a grave offence ;
Gates, lectures, chapels, were his chiefest care,
Morality he left to Providence.

XLIII.

Yet to compassion's side he'd never lean,
But punish'd strictly every moral scrape,
When once discovered, as if it had been
Some awful case of murder or of rape.
Some viewed his reverence with exceeding fear,
And some with great contempt, but none with love ;
Though as a serpent wise, 'twas very clear
His nature 'd devilish little of the dove.

XLIV.

He was inflexible in punishment,
And passed each sentence with apparent joy ;
He rusticated—to a great extent,
And, much too oft, expulsion would employ.
Yet even then 'twas said that you might note
His ruling passion :—there's a tale that he
To some youth's father, in this manner wrote,
“ Your son's expelled the college. Q. E. D.”

XLV.

He was a well intentioned man in fact,
Although his head would lead his heart astray ;
He was not gifted with sufficient tact
To guide the steps of youth a proper way.
He lacked discernment, and was somewhat blind
To note each character's distinctive mark,
To catch the finer traits of each young mind,
The good and bad, the brilliant and the dark.

XLVI.

Such was the Tutor, and no further share,
In this our page, to claim must he presume ;
We'll merely add—he was (most tutors are)
The Dagon of the Combination-room :
A room so called since every night in it
The college luminaries all *combine*
To crack their nuts, applaud each other's wit,
And drink a quantity of strong port wine.

XLVII.

In meditation deep his reverence sate,
Both hands supporting his right learned head,
Which then was working at a rapid rate ;
Around him on his writing-desk ^{were} ~~was~~ spread
Six Algebra's, four Euclid's, and a Locke.
Such was the sight his eyes encountered, when
Edward (preluding with a gentle knock),
Like Daniel, stood within the lion's den.

XLVIII.

Roused by the interruption, with a frown,
The angry Tutor started to his feet ;
But recognizing, at a glance, the gown,
He motioned the intruder to a seat.

Edward made known his errand, and his name,
Then paused, and not a sound the silence broke ;
Till forth, at last, the wished-for answer came—
The great man blandly smiled, and smiling spoke.

XLIX.

“ It gives me pleasure, sir, to see you here—
I know your father, and I hope to see
The same good qualities in you appear
Which he has shown, through life, so constantly.

Cambridge is somewhat of a ticklish place
For youth, at first; but caution will suffice,
I trust, to keep you out of all disgrace,
As I shall aid you with my best advice.

L.

“ There is one thing I must beg leave to call
Your best attention to, as it is one
The first and most important of them all,
And which by no means must be left undone ;—
I mean a strict attendance, every day,
On college lectures, which I think you’ll find
(Though I am saying it who should not say)
Of great advantage to assist your mind.

LI.

“ In mathematics ‘tis my pleasing task
‘To teach the young idea how to shoot,’
And answer any question you may ask
In unknown numbers, fractions, or square root.
Euclid and Algebra, alternate, claim
Your daily notice (such the college rule),
And Gerund (that’s my brother lecturer’s name)
You’ll find in classics, I’ll engage, no fool.

LII.

" In chapel your attendance must be strict—
Eight times a week is just the freshman's share,
Which, if neglected, I must needs inflict
Such punishment as you'll find hard to bear.
Our gates are closed at ten, and I request
You'll not be later than an hour beyond ;
Nor spend the period of allotted rest
In idle follies, of which some are fond.

LIII.

" 'Tis fitting, too, and shows a proper sense
Of just economy, to dine in hall ;
For private dinners are a great expense,
And college cooks the pocket sadly maul.
Such are the points that seem, my dear young friend,
At first most requisite for you to know :
And now my long discourse must have an end,
As I've no more to say—so you may go."

LIV.

Thus, then, the formidable visit passed,
The Tutor quietly resumed his book ;
And Edward, suffered to depart at last,
Eased of a mighty load, his farewell took ;
Feeling, no doubt, as does some guilty soul,
Which, all its wickedness at length forgiven,
And doomed in flames of fire no more to roll,
Gets out of purgatory into heav'n.

LV.

Since his arrival, several weeks had flown,
With no event of much importance rife,
And Edward now had gradually grown
Somewhat accustomed to a college life.
His circle of acquaintance was but small,
He shunned a larger, as some freshmen do ;
Yet he'd his set of friends, and of them all
We shall describe, particularly, two.

LVI.

Both were of older standing, and the one
Was drawing nigh the close of his career,
His course of study he had nearly run ;
And those who marked his pallid cheek might fear,
And fear with reason, that the spirit's strife
In that worn frame not long was doomed to last :
Excitement still kept in the spark of life,
A spark whose brilliancy was waning fast.

LVII.

He, from the outset, with unflagging zeal,
The loftiest paths of Science had pursued,
Of all her mysteries had unclosed the seal,
Till even Science owned herself subdued ;
Yet had the body suffered for the mind,
The sword was fairly wearing out the sheath ;
And with the laurel-crown was intertwined
The consecrated cypress-branch of death.

LVIII.

Him did the Tutors reverently view,
As one whose future triumphs were to crown
(For honours with them were, alas ! but few)
The college with unparallel'd renown.
It tickled much their vanity, the thought
That one, at least, amongst them would be known,
Whose glory might, in widely-spread report,
For many a pluck and wooden spoon atone.

LIX.

They used all means to fire his ardent soul,
To rouse his spirit and excite his pride ;
They left, in spurring to the fatal goal,
No string untouched, no artifice untried ;
They, in their mad concupiscence of fame,
Wasted no thought upon its object's doom ;
To them 'twas nothing, if the wrangler's name
Would only serve to decorate his tomb.

LX.

He to our hero had been pointed out
By Plane, the tutor, as a fitting friend,
Whose councils might be heard without a doubt,
As always tending to some proper end.
Edward still heard his praises, day by day,
As one whose rare example should inspire
His latent energies, and guide his way,
As did the Jews the pillar of God's fire.

LXI.

A slight acquaintance had at first been formed,
Then, by degrees, some intimacy came,
Till, as their hearts towards each other warmed,
Acquaintance ripened into friendship's flaine.
Each day that passed their natures closer bound,
With some invisible but strong cement ;
"The one thing needful," each in th' other found,
Both young, both eager, yet how different !

LXII.

Edward's affection was a kind of awe,
Of admiration and of love combined ;
His eyes were dazzled, and but dimly saw
The mighty workings of that master-mind.
While oft the well-worn page would Harvey close,
Suffer his wearied spirit to unbend,
And snatch a brief, but ah ! how sweet repose,
In the untutor'd love of his young friend.

LXIII.

In far a different mould was Vincent cast,
Science held no dominion in his breast ;
He knew that youth would not for ever last,
And snatched its short-lived joys with double zest.
Wild leapt his young blood, and the path he trod,
Through all the mazes of enjoyment ran ;
Nor for the mighty empire of a God,
Would he have barter'd the delights of man !

LXIV.

He was a libertine,—a clever one,
But yet a libertine whose very sight
Struck all the saints with horror;—he had won
Full many a trophy in debauchery's fight.
Old women viewed him with suspicious dread,—
Not so the young ones, or they 're much belied:
He rarely slept within his college bed,
And Barnwell hailed him with a mother's pride.

LXV.

Yet it were well had he confined his sport
To that preserve of prostitution's game,
Nor changed caresses bargained for and bought,
For others purchased by a maiden's shame.
Those chartered syrens, by profession kind,
Stood at his beck,—he had but to demand;
But, sooth to say, he often felt inclined
To deal a little in the contraband.

LXVI.

He was a “fisher,” like the saint of old,
But not of “men,” alas ! and it was said,
His fine-wrought nets were skilful to enfold
Within their meshes many a hapless maid.

He thought no stratagem could be unfair,
Whereby possession’s bliss he might enjoy ;
Yet played with woman’s love, as if it were,
When once obtained, an almost worthless toy.

LXVII.

He was extravagant in all he did—
His wines were faultless, and superb each feast
He gave. The tutors would have gladly rid
The college of so turbulent a guest ;
But in his purse their menials viewed such charms,
The measure had been perilous to try,
Lest Cook and Butler should rise up in arms,
And scullions wave their caps in mutiny.

LXVIII.

Edward was slightly intimate with him—

An intimacy with great peril rife,
For Vincent had begun, in wanton whim,
T' initiate the “ Freshman ” into LIFE.
As January, too, was drawing near,
Harvey was too intent on his degree,
By counsel to instil a wholesome fear,
And aid his friend's too weak morality.

LXIX.

This said morality, we're loth to say,

Had lately been extremely on the wane ;
And Edward was proceeding in a way,
Which caused some umbrage to the worthy Plane.
'Tis true, he had not caught him, hitherto,
In any overt act of serious vice ;
But yet, one morning, he'd come in at two,
And missed a Sunday-chapel once or twice.

LXX.

The term was over, and a great relief
The Freshmen found their six-weeks' holiday :
Some hurried home, to eat their Christmas beef,
And some, of whom was Edward, chose to stay.
His home was distant, so he wrote a line
To say he'd stopped to read "Trig'nometry;"
Which for a *fair excuse* he did design,
But, 'twixt ourselves, it was more like a *lie*!

LXXI.

And now arrived, in all its awful state,
The examination for "B. A. degree;"
And you might see at every college-gate,
Of pallid youths a vast variety.
Here were Examiners, who, pompous, walked
With piles of papers underneath each arm;
And there EXAMINEES in whispers talked
Of the next subject—with extreme alarm !

LXXII.

“ That was a d—d hard paper,” mutters one.

“ They never set so stiff an one before,”
Exclaims another; “ how much have you done ? ”

“ Oh, pretty fair—I think I sent up four ; ”
“ Oh ! *I* did ten, but four of them were wrong,
And three, my Tutor says, not perfect quite ;
And one I wrote too short, and one too long—
But *one*, thank God ! I know ’s completely right.”

LXXIII.

At length, the long expected period passed,
Hundreds of bosoms throbbed with hope and fear ;
And bets were thick of who’d be first—who last,
Who would be plucked outright—who very near.
Some swore they did not care a single curse,
“ Not they,—a man must be a fool to funk ; ”
Whilst others, whose performance had been worse,
Consoled themselves—by getting very drunk.

LXXIV.

The lists came out, and Harvey's name was there

As Senior Wrangler ; and as he alone

Concerns our story, what the others were,

It is not requisite we should make known.

Most thought themselves excessively ill used,

And grudged the sums they'd paid for being crammed ;

All the Examiners were much abused,

And H—rs got particularly d—d.

LXXV.

On the next morning there was much to do,

It was the day of taking the degrees :

A day much counted on—with reason too,

Since dons and bed-makers then sacked their fees !

It seems incredible that men, full grown,

Should still so hanker after “ childish things ; ”

Should read so much, and *pay*—not read alone,

Merely to gain a pair of “ leading strings.”⁽¹⁾

LXXVI.

The lofty Senate-House was filled—and there
Sat the Vice-Chancellor on his dread throne,
Girt with a phalanx of the wise and fair,
For ladies' eyes amongst the “Doctors” shone.

Above, the undergraduates appeared
In crowds, to make an uproar nothing loth ;
And Harvey was considerably cheered,
As slowly he advanced to take the oath.

LXXVII.

The gaze of all was on him, and a glass
Some fair young hand would delicately raise,
More clearly to behold the “lion” pass,
While some his looks, and some his learning praise.
“What tender eyes,” sighed one, “so soft yet bright !
(And then she gracefully arranged her veil,)”
“But, oh ! that nasty reading’s spoilt him quite,
“Poor dear young man ! he looks so *very* pale !”

LXXVIII.

And she was right—his paleness was extreme,
He shook with illness, and could scarce complete
The ceremony : though he strove to seem
At ease, 'twas useless ; and his trembling feet
Had hardly reached his home, before they sunk,
And suffering's strength o'ercame his stubborn will.
The people at his lodgings thought him drunk,
Until they found him seriously ill.

LXXIX.

Then he was put to bed, and they sent off
For medical advice : the doctor came,
Looked solemn, said it was an ugly cough,
And gave no hopes, but—took his fee the same.
He called, most regularly, twice a day,
(Ill-omened visits to a patient's purse,)
Still shook his head, still took his fee away,
Whilst Harvey, hour by hour, was growing worse.

LXXX.

All skill was valueless ;—how could the leech
Deaden by art the *spirit's* sense of pain ;
Revive the shattered energies, and teach
Youth's dried-up sources to gush forth again ?
Furled were the soaring pinions of the soul,
The o'er-bent bow had snapped to meet no more ;
Crushed at the fountain lay the silver bowl,
And none could make it as it was before.

LXXXI.

Fast sank that doomed one, till his wasted frame
Would scarcely mark the bed whereon it pressed ;
And his young spirit, once the slave of fame,
Panted, impatient, for eternal rest !
As stands the victor o'er his prostrate foe,
And half regrets the havoc he has made,
Whilst pity still restrains the final blow,
So death, awhile, the “ *conp-de-grace* ” delayed

LXXXII.

His parents had been summoned to the scene,
And sat in watchful anguish by his bed ;
His love to them a source of bliss had been,
And o'er their latter days enjoyment shed.
And he would lay for hours, his pale thin hand
Clasped in his mother's, while, in words like these,
So weakly breathed you scarce could understand,
His burdened feelings found a partial ease.

LXXXIII.

“ Not such the meeting”—and he faintly smiled,—
“ This dull close room, this silence, and those tears—
“ Not such the meeting, Mother, which beguiled
“ With hope the labours of my weary years ;
“ Not such the picture, which in each fond heart
“ Imagination’s fairy pencil drew ;
“ To meet again, and only meet to part,
“ To speak once more, and only an—adieu !

LXXXIV.

“ Oft, when my wearied brain would claim repose,
“ The reins of fancy loosened, I would lie,
“ Whilst ever and anon there smiling rose
“ A beauteous vision to my spirit’s eye ;
“ Methought before me lay a sunny land,
“ Where thrilling accents of angelic song
“ Stole floating through the air ; while, hand in hand,
“ Forms fairer far than mortal moved along !

LXXXV.

“ And then the minstrels of that unseen choir
“ Breathed forth a melody of sweeter strain,
“ And my astonished eyes beheld my sire,
“ With thee, my Mother, wandering o’er the plain ;
“ And with ye there was one, O God ! how fair,
“ Fair as ere perfidy had stamped her shame—
“ Yes, the beloved, the treacherous, was there,
“ The one I cannot—will not—dare not name !

LXXXVI.

" And yet, methought, appeared another face
 " And form,—'twas mine ! and I was kneeling down
 " By her : ye blessed us ^{is} in a soft embrace ~~in~~
 " She seemed to whisper, ' Dearest, I'm thine own !'
 " Then rose a thousand perfumes to the skies,
 " In louder strains the heav'nly music broke ;
 " Flashed from the flow'rs a thousand brighter dyes,
 " Till burst the gorgeous bubble, and—I woke !

LXXXVII.

" Oh ! 'twas a beauteous vision, and did seem,
 " In all its vivid brilliancy, so clear,
 " 'Twere hard to think it but an empty dream,
 " A mere illusion, meaningless, though dear !
 " Oh ! twas a beauteous vision, Mother mine,
 " A concentration of delight and love,
 " Which waits the impress of the hand divine—
 " And surely will be realized above !

LXXXVIII.

“ Oh ! could I breathe, once more, that balmy air
“ Which fanned my brow in childhood, I were blest ;
“ Twould give me strength this agony to bear,
“ And uncomplaining I could sink to rest !
“ Hard falls the hand of fate upon my youth,
“ And death hath rudely its sweet chords unstrung :
“ Was there no riper bud ? O God ! in sooth
“ It is a bitter thing to die so young ! ”

LXXXIX.

He ceased, and then all suddenly there passed
A slight convulsion o'er his faded frame ;
And his white lips, still quiv'ring to the last,
Strove faintly to articulate a name.
Unheard by all except the mother's ear,
Who, in her anguish, tremblingly bent o'er,
And with that name scarce uttered, yet so dear,
The spirit passed, and Harvey was no more !

XC.

Yes, he was gone—the learned and the good,
Virtue availed not, nor could science save ;
Chilled was the current of his youthful blood,
And years of labour had but dug his grave.
Prayers were not wanting, for the pious Plane
Knelt night and morning by the sufferer's side ;
The leech had used his art, but all in vain—
Pills, prayers, and Plane availed not—and he died.

XCI.

Edward was certainly much grieved, at first,
And long deplored the loss of such a friend ;
But grief of all descriptions, e'en the worst,
By nature's wise provision hath an end.
In Vincent's gay society he sought
For consolation ; and he quickly found
An antidote to every serious thought,
In dissipation's gay and giddy round.

XCII.

It were a tedious task, and one, I fear
But little edifying, to retrace
Each separate folly of their mad career,
Each separate token of their joint disgrace.
The wild carouse—potations long and deep,
The midnight revel, and the midnight brawl,
The brothel's short and unrefreshing sleep,
Were best but hinted at—if told at all.

XCIII.

Such was their life: and none will be surprised
That these backslidings from the holy way,
The saints of Granta should have scandalized,
And shocked those “*Sims*”⁽²⁾ who never went astray.
Of such the college had a noted set,
Who, still more clear to make their piety,
On certain evenings, by appointment met
To praise the Lord, and—tipple weak bohea !

XCIV.

They were queer fellows, and the name of "*Sims*,"
Among the godless, was a standing jest;
Their sober parties, and their evening hymns,
To other banquets gave a pleasant zest;
And those who listened oftentimes might hear
The pious chantings which the saints began,
Rudely re-echoed from some chamber near,
By "Paddy's Wedding," or by "Moll's Flash-man."

XCV.

To them no Sabbath was a *resting* day,
They deemed repose deserving of reproof;
In their own chapel not content to pray,
They swelled "St. Mary's" to the very roof.
Oft, too, our hero and his friend would pass
By that famed edifice—but we're afraid
'Twas not religion, but some pretty lass,
Which drew their steps along the "King's Parade."

XCVI.

It is a curious and instructive sight
That "King's Parade" on Sunday evening shows ;
Loads of strange animals emerge to sight,
Whores, housemaids, milliners, and Counter-beaux !
Coarse jests are bandied through the motley throng,
Snobs meet their sweethearts at this careless hour,
And troops of dashing gownsmen roam along,
"Seeking," like Satan, "whom they shall devour."

XCVII.

And, lo ! a striking feature in the scene,
Her spacious doors "St. Mary's" opens wide,
Whence issues forth, with reverential mien,
Of yawning worshippers the living tide.
These swell the concourse, and the whole doth form
A startling contrast, as one smiling sees,
Together jumbled—a promiscuous swarm,
A mingled mass of drabs and devotees.

XCVIII.

There too, conspicuous, with majestic walk,
Their white bands striking terror from afar,
The well-paid guardians of our morals stalk,
Exterminators of each rash cigar !
No grub so filthy, but it hath its use,
And true the axiom in this case one finds,
When harlot-hunting parsons rake the stews—
A dirty task, and fit for dirty minds.

XCIX.

But “six and eightpence” pays the odious fame :
These moral scavengers, to gain their fee,
Haunt each low sink of infamy and shame,
And act the nightmen to society !
So o'er the ocean, mariners have seen
To speed, on filthy sustenance intent,
(How apt a simile !) the bird obscene,
Which feeds upon another's excrement.

C.

O dissipation! thou art wondrous sweet,
When first we taste thee—but that soon is past;
And then the disappointment is complete,
For cursed bitter dost thou get at last!
Thou bringest to us, in thy lengthy train,
The very worst of all terrestrial ills:
The constitution may be cured again—
But who the devil can get rid of bills?

CI.

Much, in all ages, has been sung and said
About the perfidy of bosom friends,
Who cut your company when wealth has fled—
But, oh! your duns' acquaintance never ends!
That friends were like them we have often wished—
Whilst rich, they scarcely trouble you at all;
But when you're ruined thoroughly, and dished,
By G— the faithful fellows always call!

CII.

Their stock of lies is never known to fail,
Excuses are not wanting in the least ;
They forge as many as (in Scripture's tale)
Those made, we're told, who shirked the marriage feast.
One has "a payment to make up," and one
"Has lately broke, and needs the means of life;"
And then a third, most sentimental dun,
Has "six small children, and a pregnant wife."

CIII.

Now Edward was beset by not a few
Of these annoyances, who, night and day,
Knocked at his door, and clamoured for their due,
In a particularly vexing way ;
They seemed to think their perseverance might
Induce our hero, like the "widow's judge,"
To grant to noise what he refused to right—
But they were wrong, for Edward would not budge.

CIV.

He kept at home, and wisely too, for he

Had none of what is vulgarly called "tin;"

The last he'd squandered on his "chère amie,"

To gratify the lady's taste for gin.

To raise the wind by Vincent's aid he'd tried,

But there his "wounded spirit found no balm,"

For his friend's purse, it cannot be denied,

Was, like his own, much subject to a calm.

CV.

This state of things could not for ever last,

Credit grew scarce, and luxuries were dear ;

The long vacation was approaching fast,

And how to spend it was by no means clear.

At length occurred a practicable scheme—

Edward resolved to visit home once more ;

The plan was cheap, at least, though he might deem

This filial duty an especial bore.

CVI.

To lessen somewhat the extreme *ennui*
He well foresaw this visit would attend,
By being bored at least in *company*,
He gave an invitation to his friend.
“Be not disturbed,” he said, by “scruples nice—
“A friend of mine, my father ’ll greet with joy;
“And though he’s rather strict, and too precise,
“Yet he’s a rare old hospitable boy!”

CVII.

Vincent had no objection to propose—
Indeed his constitution had at length
Some need of rest, and plainly did disclose
Undoubted symptoms of decaying strength.
So the two worthies quickly were agreed;
They borrowed cash, to clear them on the road,
And, one fine night, set off with all due speed.
(While duns were sleeping) to their fresh abode.

CVIII.

Warm were the greetings which affection gave,
And tears were flowing—(not the tears of pain,
But of delight)—the tears of those who have
Their own lost wanderer by their side again ;
The hallowed influence of that sainted love
Which swells the parents' and the sister's breast,
Around the prodigal their soft links wove,
And stilled the din of passion into rest.

CIX.

The stranger failed not to receive his share
(When dearer ties had claimed their fitting part)
Of courteous welcome from the aged pair—
A welcome not of form, but from the heart.
And then their plain, but honest kindness took
A character of soft and winning grace,
From the half bashful, half approving look
Which lighted Isabel's expressive face.

CX.

Now Vincent's bosom was by no means ice,
Indeed, "volcano" were a fitter name ;
A pretty face, once seen, would in a trice
Kindle a most ungovernable flame ;
O'er which no spark ethereal held the sway
Of pure affection, or Platonic fire ;
Whose light contracted each unholy ray
From the dark elements of gross desire.

CXI.

He was an atheist to the creed of love,
His unbelief was open and sincere ;
The very mention never failed to move
His pitying smile, or cold and callous sneer.
He deemed the person, not the heart, a prize,
Esteem'd the sex a venal thing, and base ;
A kind of rather useful merchandise,
Towards the propagation of one's race.

CXII.

It must be owned that Vincent went too far,
In this low estimate of female worth ;
Who has not heard, and read, that women are
“The greatest blessings to be found on earth ?”
Legions of scribblers, from the earliest times,
Have never ceased their pens and brains to vex,
In tedious prose, and still more tedious rhymes,
With panegyrics on the lovely sex.

CXIII.

Now Horace says, 'tis proper to pursue
A middle course, in all things, as the best ;
And, doubtless, it is fitting so to do
In this great matter, as in all the rest .
Consider woman with impartial eye,
As neither wholly good, nor wholly evil :
Not wholly sprung from hell, nor dropt from sky,
Not wholly angel, and not wholly devil.

CXIV.

There's no denying that the charming fair
Are very useful in their proper sphere ;
But then, 'tis deuced hard to keep them there—
They love to meddle, and to interfere
In other matters, which (of right) belong
To man's less frivolous and feeble sway ;
And none can tell the sad amount of wrong
The sex, since Eve's first slip, have done that way.

CXV.

There is a certain reverence, 'tis just,
The weaker sex should from the stronger claim—
The only things one hesitates to trust
To woman's keeping, are one's purse and fame.
Rings, robes, silk stockings, cachmeres, frills, and furs,
On your finances form a ceaseless drain,
'Till husbands curse the name of milliners,
And long for *jig-leaves* to come in again !

CXVI.

If she prefer to ornament your brows,
And wound your honour, but preserve your purse,
The wife is called a strumpet; but her spouse
Is thought an ass—and that's a d—d deal worse!
Wives there may be, both chaste and frugal too,
But there's a maxim I was taught at school—
(It may be false, but I believe it true)—
“‘Tis the exception which makes good the rule!”

CXVII.

But to return: the love which oft of yore
His well-trained lips to others had professed,
The sight of Isabel aroused once more,
And fired the train of passion in his breast.
He prayed propitious Fortune, which had thrown
A prize so unexpected in his way,
With prosperous issue the attempt to crown,
And aid the capture of so fair a prey.

CXVIII.

His judgment taught him that no vulgar art,
Such as a vulgar victory might win,
Would gain the virgin-fortress of her heart,
And yield up Virtue's citadel to sin.

No common conquest was the one he sought,
Consummate talent must the scheme devise ;
And dearly must the victory be bought—
But not too dearly, for so rare a prize.

CXIX.

His first endeavours were employed to gain
A surer footing in his friend's abode
Than mere acquaintance gave ; and to attain
The parents' favour seemed the shortest road.

His subtle influence round their hearts to wind,
And steal their confidence, was done with ease ;
For nature had endowed his supple mind
With skill to flatter, and with art to please.

CXX.

His interest daily more extended grew,
Their unsuspecting natures had been won,
Until, at last, they'd almost learned to view
The quondam stranger as another son.
And Isabel (whose soul, to duty bent,
Followed obedient the parental voice,)
Loved with a fond but guileless sentiment
The fascinating object of their choice.

CXXI.

Oft in some lone and unfrequented walk,
Where fancy prompted, the young pair would stray,
No envious eye to watch, no tongue to talk,
No crabb'd duenna to observe the way.
Sweet were those meetings, and the maiden's heart
Warmed with a fatal but delicious flame ;
While Vincent acted to the life his part,
And uttered all of love--except the name.

CXXII.

And he had lately, with insidious zeal,
A seeming interest in her mind displayed,
Taught her her own deficiencies to feel,
And mourn the little progress she had made:
Then, with apparent candour, would suggest
(Candour the hypocrite's unfailing mask)
Such slight improvements as appeared the best,
And offered his assistance to the task.

CXXIII.

He chose her studies, and the books he lent,
Though nominally fitted to improve,
Yet in reality were merely meant
In reason's garb to pave the way of love.
'Tis true, no grossness in the page appeared,
To rouse disgust, or raise the modest blush ;
Their's was the art concealed—and, so, unfear'd—
To undermine, but not at once to crush.

CXXIV.

Vincent's experience had foreseen the use
Of means like these towards the wished-for end :
For he had pondered well on every *ruse*,
Which to success might ultimately tend :
And no contrivance of his varied skill,
He knew, would operate with greater force,
Than thus a subtle poison to instil,
And taint the stream of virtue at its source.

CXXV.

There is a potent agency in books,
To sway the feelings of a youthful mind :
In them no curious or reproving looks,
No awkward queries do we dread to find :
Those silent monitors too often teach
A fearful lesson, writ in words of fire,
And by a scarce perceived, but fatal breach,
Admit the lawless demons of desire.

CXXVI.

Sure was the venom of the deadly spell,
Swift was the progress of the work of shame ;
And one, who closely watched the maid, might tell
Her very nature was no more the same :
A soft voluptuous languor had o'erspread
The form whose bounding grace once mocked the fawn,
And from her eye a brighter glance there sped,
The glance of passion in its early dawn.

CXXVII.

What could her untaught purity avail
Against the practised weapons of deceit ?
Love's ever false, but fascinating tale,
To maiden inexperience still is sweet.
She found in Vincent, or believed she found,
A sure foundation, and a fitting base,
Whereon her heart's young confidence to ground,
Nor deemed the superstructure were disgrace.

CXXVIII.

She had not paused to analyze or sift
The soft emotions of that growing love,
Which blessed her being, and appeared to lift
Her earthly nature to the realms above.
Were it an angel's or a demon's wing,
Whereon her spirit had essayed to soar,
Her reason asked not;—she but knew one thing,
That she was happy—and she sought no more.

CXXIX.

Vincent had marked, with well dissembled care,
The rapid progress of the scheme he'd laid,
And now determined, while the path lay fair,
To end his labours, and possess the maid.
Right in his grasp the tempting fruit was set—
Why hesitate to pluck the wished-for joy?
The bird was struggling in the fowler's net—
Why hesitate to seize, and to destroy?

CXXX.

Fair was the evening, not a breath of wind
Stirred in the foliage, or disturbed the stream ;
Phœbus his radiant empire had resigned
To his pale sister's mild and modest beam.
Nature's vast family lay hushed and still,
The world itself seemed sinking to repose ;
And, save the trickling of yon silver rill,
No sound, to break the spell of silence, rose.

CXXXI.

To the cool covert of a verdant grove,
Through whose o'erarching branches Luna shed
Her rays, (as if to smile upon their love,)
Chance had, that evening, the young couple led :
It seemed a spot where only lovers meet,
To the profane and vulgar step denied ;—
They sat together in that lone retreat,
The tempter, and the tempted—side by side.

CXXXII.

No sound was uttered;—but that outward pause
Was not the token of internal rest;
Wild feelings flushed her cheek, and heaved the gauze
Which veiled the virgin beauties of her breast.
Her head was raised, to check the golden hair
Which wantoned o'er her brow; then drooped again
To seek her lover's breast—and, pillow'd there,
She seemed a new, *yet sinless Magdalén*!

CXXXIII.

His arm encircled her—and, bending down,
His eager lips imbibed her balmy breath:—
Oh! at that instant could her life have flown,
She would have welcomed so beloved a death!
The pause was broken—and the maiden heard
The tale of passion breathed into her ear,
By him whose every tone, whose every word,
She deemed the music of a higher sphere.

CXXXIV.

“ Fairest, why thus despondent dost thou lie?
“ Say, why doth melancholy veil thy charms?
“ Why lights not passion up thy glorious eye?
“ Why dost thou tremble in thy Vincent's arms?
“ Thy lover is beside thee ;—art thou not
“ His dearest joy, his very life and *bride*?
“ Oh! let our union consecrate the spot,
“ Be mine, sweet Isabel, and nature's pride.

CXXXV.

“ What needs there more to sanctify the rite?
“ Above the canopy of God is spread ;
“ And the pale queen of heaven's approving light
“ Deigns its soft radiance o'er the scene to shed.
“ Where is the earthly temple which can boast
“ A fane so purely sacred and divine?
“ Our vows are sealed before th' angelic host,
“ And the Almighty hath prepared our shrine !”

CXXXVI.

“ Love, in all creatures, Providence hath made
“ To be the solace of their weary fate :
“ In the recesses of yon leafy glade,
“ Each bird reposes by its feather’d mate.
“ Through the wide universe one law extends,
“ Obeyed below, and ratified above ;
“ The wisest, noblest, of our Maker’s ends—
“ God made the universe, and God is love !”

CXXXVII.

“ Arouse thee, dearest, ’tis thy lover’s arm
“ Which clasps thy yielding form ; and, oh ! thou art
“ Pressed to a bosom where, to reach thee, harm
“ Must find its passage through a lover’s heart !
“ Arouse thee, dearest, ’tis thy nuptial hour,
“ And here, my bride, I claim thee with a kiss ;
“ Mine art thou, maiden !—and in this fair bower,
“ Pleasure and love have strewn the couch of bliss.”

CXXXVIII.

He ceased—and while the maid's enraptured soul
Drank deep of love, yet failed to quench its drouth,
His daring lips, now grown more daring, stole
Their first won trophies from her roseate mouth.
Was it the virgin's fear alone which drove
The tell-tale glow of crimson to her cheek ?
Was it the virgin's fear, or was it love,
Which broke the heart's deep trance, and bade it speak ?

CXXXIX.

“ Here in this spot, where peace would seem to reign,
“ Where earth, and sky, and nature woo to rest,
“ My troubled spirit seeks repose in vain,
“ And passion's deadly conflicts rack my breast.
“ Like the frail bark, on stormy waters cast,
“ Which wind and billows threaten to o'erwhelm,
“ My feeble reason bends beneath the blast,
“ And sinks—unless thy hand direct the helm.

CXL.

“ There is a magic in each word of thine,
“ To win the soul against its better sense,
“ To clothe the form of sin in garb divine,
“ And give to passion’s voice, omnipotence.
“ Thy love assigns a nobler, dearer part—
“ Beloved by thee, a prouder thing I seem ;
“ And in the dreary desert of my heart
“ Thou makest to gush forth a living stream.

CXLI.

“ There is a piercing but mysterious fire,
“ Which lights thy glances when on me they turn,
“ As though they glowed with some untold desire—
“ And oh ! how sweet thy kisses !—but they burn.
“ ’Tis strange, I never felt a sense of shame
“ When Edward or my parents pressed my brow ;
“ Their’s were love’s kisses too, but not the same,—
“ They left no seorch behind, as thine do now.

CXLII.

“ Yes, thou hast claimed me, and I own the bond—
“ Love made me what I am, and love alone ;
“ Love formed my nature by its magic wand,
“ Love the Creator re-demands his own.
“ Thine am I, Vincent—thine, for thou art love—
“ All other ties, all other names, farewell !
“ Thine am I, ever thine—below, above—
“ In life or death still thine—in heaven or hell.”

CXLIII.

Here must the veil be dropped ;—it were not right,
Our pen should dwell at length upon the rest,
Or paint the guilty pleasures of that night—
No ! the sad sequel must be only guessed.
How vows were pledged within that conscious bower,
How warm caresses more unguarded grew ;
Till passion triumphed in that fatal hour,
And “shuddering virtue ^{fade} ~~bud~~” the maid “ adieu.”

CXLIV.

'Twas not correct, nay, very wrong, we know,
And ought to make good folks sincerely grieve,
That innocence should be deluded so—
But then the girls are foolish to believe.
Her virtue should more firmly have held out—
But we relate the thing as it occurred;
These love-affairs are always, none can doubt,
Somewhat improper, and no less absurd.

CXLV.

Now here our Pegasus must take a leap,
We skip some half-a-dozen months, and then
(The loss no doubt our readers will hold cheap)
Edward is fixed at Granta once again.
The worthy pastor 'd pinched himself to pay
The past year's follies of his worthless son,
And Edward had arrived, at ease, and gay,
Relieved from dread of bailiff or of dun.

CXLVI.

Duns are sad hypocrites, and 'tis a shame
They so insidiously should gild the pills
They make us swallow, by the specious name
Of "small accounts" they christen all their bills.
Each smirking rascal, with unblushing front,
Deems it a point of etiquette to call
His six-and-thirty pages of account,
(*Lucus a non lucendo*) always "*small.*"

* * * * *

CXLVII.

Wild sped the revel; shout, and song, and jest,
Rang through the chamber and alarmed the street;
In sooth it was a grand, "right merrie" feast,
As all feasts are when youths congenial meet.
The rarest fruits the season could afford,
To tempt the taste, in rich profusion lay;
Wines the most costly decked the groaning board,
(All which unhappy fathers had to pay).

CXLVIII.

Some were at dice, and some at *rouge-et-noir*,
Some sang a bawdy song, or made a joke ;
Some were dead drunk and lying on the floor,
Whilst some were drinking still, and some did smoke.
Edward was listening to a drunken set,
Who praised the charms and boasted the renown
Of some young lady they had somewhere met,
Who'd lately made her *début* on the town.

CXLIX.

We're loth to own it, but the god of wine
Had put our hero's faculties to flight,
And he proposed the somewhat rash design
Of visiting the nymph that very night.
The rest agreed, and off the party went,
(Regarding little equilibrium's laws),
To 'scape the proctor's vigilance intent,
And safely reach the colony of w—s.

CL.

In all due time they made their destined port,
A time when honest folks are in their beds,
And as they went along, by way of sport,
They broke some dozen lamps and ditto heads.
The brothel stood before them, and a knock,
Which to the door was knowingly applied,
Like "open Sesame," undid the lock,
And all were speedily safe lodged inside.

CLI.

One of the troop more sober than the rest,
And thus enabled to make better haste,
Outstripped the others, and with ribald jest,
And maudlin fondness, clasped the Cyprian's waist.
Say—why doth Edward start, as if there sped
Through his seared brain the blasting bolt of hell?
Why hath the hue of death his cheek o'erspread?
What mean these words, "Darnation!—Isabel!"

NOTES.

NOTE (1) STANZA LXXV.

Merely to gain a pair of “leading strings.”

The only *striking* difference between the Undergraduate's gown, and that of a B.A., is simply the addition of *a pair of strings* to the latter.

NOTE (2) STANZA XCIII.

And shocked those “Sims” who never went astray.

Followers (more particularly) of the Rev. Charles Simeon, a celebrated evangelical preacher, at Cambridge, who died soon after this work had been put to the press: but the appellation of “Sinn” is applied, generally, to every student of a serious and religious — by those of a somewhat opposite — turn of mind.







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